

DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION

14219 RIVER ROAD
P.O. BOX 530
WALNUT GROVE, CA 95690
PHONE: (916) 776-2290
FAX: (916) 776-2293



January 13, 1995

To: Delta Protection Commission

From: Margit Aramburu, Executive Director

Subject: Ducks Unlimited Proposal for Shared Responsibility for
Grants for Wetland Restoration on Privately-Owned Lands

Background

Ducks Unlimited has received funds from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to further the Valley Care Program to implement the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture Plan. About \$100,000 are available in a fund for wetland restoration on privately-owned lands.

A portion of the funds will be expended in the Suisun Marsh in Solano County, an 85,000 acre area of mostly privately-owned duck clubs and managed wetlands.

The remainder of the funds, about \$40,000 will be made available to private landowners in the Delta, with additional funds available next year.

Types of Projects to be Funded

The types of projects which can be funded under this program include construction of brood ponds; planting of habitat on levees, on riverside berms, and on inland portions of islands; installation of water control structures or construction of interior levees for water control of areas for habitat; acquisition of conservation easements, etc.

Conditions of Grants

The funds must be matched 50/50 with funds provided by the private landowner, or other parties (non-profits, special districts, or local governments).

The grant recipient will have to sign a "site specific agreement" (a legal document) with Ducks Unlimited specifying the type and length of time of the project. Depending on the size of the grant, the length of the agreement may range from 20 to 30 years. Ducks Unlimited will prepare at no cost a management plan for the site to be used in management of the habitat area.

Current Proposal

Ducks Unlimited must "obligate" the funds by March 1, 1995. Ducks Unlimited would like to obligate the funds with the Delta Protection Commission. Jointly, Ducks Unlimited and the Delta Protection Commission would call for proposals, review, and rank the proposals based on the general criteria listed here and more specific criteria to be reviewed by Ducks Unlimited and the Commission, and grant the funds to several private land-owners for construction in the spring and summer of 1995.

The proposed program would take limited staff time of the Commission to publicize the grants program, develop more specific grant evaluation criteria, review and rank the proposals, and prepare staff analysis for Commission review at a public meeting. Some work could be performed by student assistants under the supervision of the Executive Director.

Legal Justification

The Delta Protection Act of 1992 states "the Commission may promote, facilitate, and administer the acquisition of voluntary private and public wildlife and agricultural conservation easements in the Delta (Section 29756)...the Commission may apply for and accept federal grants or other federal funds and receive gifts, donations, rents, royalties, state funds derived from bond sales, the proceeds of taxes or funds from any other state revenue sources, or any other financial support from public or private sources (Section 29757)."

Staff Recommendation

The Commission should discuss the proposal and if the Commission wants to participate in the program, should vote to direct the Chairman to enter into an agreement with Ducks Unlimited to authorize participation.